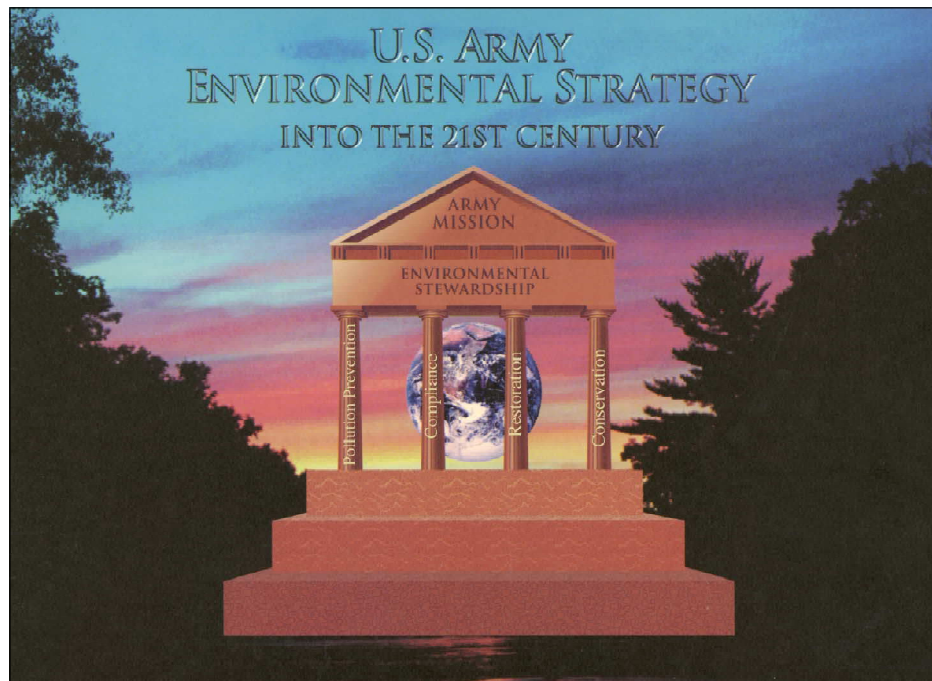


1. GOALS AND POLICIES

The Army will be a national leader in environmental and natural resource stewardship for present and future generations as an integral part of our mission.

Army Environmental Vision Statement ³



The Army's commitment to natural resources management is reflected in the *U.S. Army Environmental Strategy into the 21st Century*. The Army environmental program is symbolized as an ancient temple on a solid foundation with four great pillars supporting the environmental stewardship vision and the Army mission.

The pillars represent the four major components of the Army environmental program. The conservation component focuses on responsibly managing Army lands to ensure long-term natural resource productivity so the Army can achieve its mission. Conservation balances long-term resource use and resource protection.

As a steward of natural and cultural resources, the Army also practices preservation. Preservation focuses on resource protection. This could mean more restricted use by the Army community. Preservation is essential for ensuring the future integrity of valuable and unique natural resources, such as wetlands, endangered species, habitat, as well as historic and cultural sites.

The Army's commitment to natural resources management also is reflected in Army Regulation 200-3 (*Natural Resources—Land, Forest, and Wildlife Management*), which requires the preparation and implementation of INRMPS for all Army installations with significant natural resources.

³ Army Environmental Policy Institute. 1992. *U.S. Army Environmental Strategy into the 21st Century*. U.S. Government Printing Office 1993-747-677, 38 p.

1-1 Goals

1-1a Military Readiness

Perpetuate a healthy and sound natural environment that is essential for accomplishment of the military training mission at Fort Richardson.

1-1b Stewardship

Monitor and manage natural resources on Fort Richardson in a way that assures proper stewardship of public lands and resources entrusted to the Army.

1-1c Quality of Life

Improve the quality of life for the Fort Richardson and adjacent communities through development of aesthetics, spiritual stimulation and high value natural resources based recreational opportunities.

1-1d Compliance

Comply with laws and regulations that pertain to the management of Fort Richardson's natural resources.

1-1e Integration

Integrate elements of natural resources management into a single program, which, in turn, is integrated into Fort Richardson's environmental program and master plan.

1-2 Policies

Statements listed below represent general USARAK policies for attaining goals presented in Section 1-1 above. These statements will serve as a checklist for monitoring the plan's success. More specific objectives are included in Sections 12 through 20.

1-2a Military Readiness

- ▶ Ensure no net loss in the capability of Fort Richardson's lands to support existing and projected military missions
- ▶ Maintain quality training lands through damage minimization, mitigation, and restoration

1-2b Stewardship

- ▶ Use ecosystem management philosophies to protect, conserve, and restore native fauna and flora with an emphasis on biodiversity enhancement
- ▶ Monitor and manage soils, water, vegetation, and wildlife on Fort Richardson with a consideration for all biological communities and human values associated with these resources
- ▶ Provide economic and other human-valued products of renewable natural resources when such products can be produced in a sustainable fashion without significant negative impacts on the military training mission
- ▶ Provide professional enforcement of natural resource laws
- ▶ Involve the surrounding community in Fort Richardson's natural resources program
- ▶ Ensure that the Fort Richardson natural resources program is coordinated with other agencies and conservation organizations with similar interests

1-2c Quality of Life

- ▶ Provide opportunities for consumptive uses of natural resources within the biological and recreational carrying capacities
- ▶ Provide natural resources-based opportunities for other outdoor recreation, such as hiking, snowmobiling, rafting, birding, etc.
- ▶ Provide conservation education opportunities to the military and civilian community
- ▶ Establish and maintain an environmental setting conducive to healthy and satisfying lifestyle for the military community

1-2d Compliance

- ▶ Manage natural resources within the spirit and letter of environmental laws, particularly the Sikes Act upon which this INRMP is predicated

- ▶ Manage to protect, restore, maintain or enhance sensitive species, wetlands, and unique areas
- ▶ Use the NEPA process to make informed decisions that include natural resources considerations, mitigation, and agency and public involvement
- ▶ Ensure that Fort Richardson's natural resources program is consistent with the protection of cultural and historic resources
- ▶ Implement this INRMP within the framework of Army policies and regulations

1-2e Integration

- ▶ Ensure the integration of, and consistency among, the various activities identified within this INRMP
- ▶ Ensure that natural resources management is consistent with principles of Integrated Pest Management at Fort Richardson
- ▶ Ensure the integration of new military infrastructure development with the principles and guidelines of this plan
- ▶ Coordinate the implementation of natural resources management with the overall Fort Richardson Environmental Program
- ▶ Use the natural resources program to support and enhance other elements within the Fort Richardson Environmental Program
- ▶ Provide the command with information needed to make decisions, which include natural resources related values

1-3 Fort Richardson's Land and Natural Resources Management Policy

Over the last 10 years, U.S. Army Alaska has been inundated with numerous requests and proposals

from state, federal, and municipal government agencies, businesses, utilities, clubs, organizations, and individuals for authorization or permission to use Army lands for nonmilitary purposes. These requests have included commercial or long-term real estate interests involving rights-of-way, easements, land use permits, leases, outgrants, land transfers, exclusive use areas, and special concessions, many of which have detrimental effects on current or future military training on Fort Richardson. These types of requests will probably increase in the future as the populations of Anchorage and its satellite communities continue to grow.

In general, it is current USARAK policy to deny requests for nonmilitary uses of Fort Richardson properties if those requests include or involve a requirement for long-term real estate commitments such as leases, easements, or land transfers, or if they create a potential adverse impact on the military mission or the environment. The only exceptions to this would be when such actions clearly result in tangible benefits to the military training mission or to the environment. These situations will be carefully scrutinized and evaluated by appropriate staff members. No longer is "good public relations" alone, a justifiable reason to sacrifice limited and crucial training lands. It is also the position of USARAK to adopt a policy which favors temporary, noncommercial low-impact uses of Fort Richardson by the local community, consistent with training and the military mission, as long as Fort Richardson natural resources will not be adversely impacted.

The full policy statement is included in Appendix 1-3, and it includes examples of past requests for land uses and examples of acceptable ongoing nonmilitary land uses. This INRMP will be used for every decision and action that affects or has a potential to impact Fort Richardson lands, waters, and other natural resources.